Displaced Homo Viatores/Liminal Personae - Emilio Pettoruti & Lina Bo Bardi

Defying Classification in the Cultural Spaces between the Old & New Worlds

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Homo Viator

> *'Perhaps a stable order can only be established on earth if man always remains acutely conscious that his condition is that of a traveller…'* (Marcel, 1951)

Gerhart B. Ladner (1967) defined the *homo viator* as a wayfarer who in mediaeval times wandered between two worlds – those of *alienation* and *order*. To be *alien*, was to be a *stranger*, a terrestrial being, in search of *divine order* in a Christian world.

Whilst mediaeval (wo)man was wandering between the two worlds of terrestrial alienation and celestial divine order, between the fifteenth to twentieth centuries (s)he was a wayfarer between other two worlds – that of the strange, alien New World and that of the orderly, civilised Old World. Some of earliest Italian *homo viatores* who ventured from the Old World to present-day Argentina were Jesuit missionaries seeking to spread the gospel, *divine order*, to '*uncivilised*' indigenous peoples.

In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries various types of wayfarers originating from the Italic peninsula continued en masse to travel to the strangeness of the unknown lands of Argentina and Brazil. They were intellectuals, political exiles, freedom fighters, farm workers, artisans, architects, entrepreneurs, etc. Initially, many of the migrants established a pattern of mobility between Old and New Worlds by voyaging back and forth repeatedly. Some returned to the Old World, whilst most settled in the New World where they initially assumed the role of *liminal personae*.

Liminal Personae

> *'… the Creole political elites of Argentina and Brazil actively recruited and welcomed Italian migrants as settlers of their rural lands in order to Europeanize, civilize, and "whiten" their new multi-racial nations'.* (Gabaccia, 2001)

> *'The attributes of liminality or of liminal personae ("threshold people") are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these people elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space.'* (Turner, 1974)

Equipped with the cultural and racial capital of their European-ness and white-ness, the late nineteenth century Italian *homo viatores* began settling in large numbers into the countryside of Argentina and Brazil. Initially, this act of migration placed the Italians in an *ambiguous* socio-political position, somewhere in-between the *civilised order* of the governing Creole elites and the *alienated*, subjugated status of indigenous and African peoples.

The Creole elites of both countries were originally pleased with the liminal status of their recruits, a situation that the Italian government wished to capitalize on for its own political gain. In shipping away impoverished citizens in waves, the burden of their welfare on Italian political establishment was lightened. Yet could the displacement of the proletariat also be a source of economic benefit back home?

The Italian officials understood that economic benefit could only transpire if the Italian émigré still felt a bond with *la patria*. Preventing total assimilation in the New World, therefore, became of utmost importance to the Italian government. It thus funded programmes and implemented laws that would keep these Italian *homo viatores* culturally, emotionally, and legally connected to Italy through what historian

Mark Choate has referred to as *emigrant colonialism* (Kaplan, 2014). Across Argentina, for example, the offspring of Italian émigrés attended an *Escuela Italiana,* where Italian language and culture were promoted. Moreover, laws were implemented to guarantee that the offspring born to an Italian father abroad would be recognised as Italian citizens, as long as he/she did not renounce this right.

Transatlantic movement, therefore, was seen in a positive light by the Italian political and cultural establishments, but not in a traditional European colonialism sense. Instead of the Italian establishments gaining political dominance as a colonial power, they would instead capitalize on the liminal status of their citizens abroad. This approach can be understood in Luigi Einaudi's 1899 publication, *Un principe mercante. Studio sulla espansione coloniale italiana* [A Merchant Prince: A Study in Italian Colonial Expansion]. According to Kaplan (2014), Einaudi proposed *'that cultural and economic trade follows from open emigration rather than political domination … Italy can create a more perfect and evolved type of colonization [which is] free and independent'.*

In theory, the formation of the '*Italian colony*' abroad was intended to keep the émigré from totally assimilating and serve as a conduit for Italian economic and cultural influence in the host nation, but in a manner that was free of any political affiliation. In the eyes of the Italian political and cultural establishments, the Italian *homo viatores* in Argentina and Brazil were viewed as *liminal personae, threshold people* between the New and Old Worlds.

Liminality and Emigrant Colonialism - *civiltá italiana*

Whilst the concept of the Italian colony was a construct of the Old World political establishment, from the perspective of the New World Creole elites the purpose of the Italian *homo viator* was to *civilise* their rural lands. Unlike the mediaeval *homo viator* who was wandering in search of (divine) order, free *from* the sinful temptations *of* an alien state, the *homo viator* of an emerging modern age was called upon to bring his civilising order *to* the alien state.

This dictate by the Creole elites was predicated on the value of the Italian *homo viator's* cultural and racial capital, but devoid of granting them any real political power. Thus, the Italian *homo viator* not only occupied the position of liminality on the transatlantic scale between Old and New Worlds, (s)he also inhabited the precarious threshold on the national scale between the two unknown worlds – that of (Creole) established *order* and (indigenous/African) *strangeness*.

In the specific case of Argentina, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento viewed the cultural capital of Italians beneficial in his desire to *'civilise'* what he regarded as *'barbaric'* elements in his country. In his book '*Conflicto y armonías de las razas en América,* Sarmiento argued that Argentina's social problems were due in part to *'the Spanish legacy and miscegenation with indigenous peoples'* (Bravo, 1994). European immigration, Italians in particular, was one of his solutions.

The concept of employing Italian cultural capital *'in order to Europeanize, civilize, and whiten'* the rural lands of Argentina and Brazil was eventually expanded to include urban environs. In Argentina, the hope was that a new approach to *built order* would be representative of the new nation. This desire was logically aligned with those of Sarmiento and led to the recruitment of a new type of Italian *homo viator* - the wayfaring architect (or *artifex viator* – the travelling artist/craftsman).

Part of Sarmiento's European immigration solution looked to a movement in architecture that would transform Buenos Aires into a post-colonial, new capital city. Sarmiento was part of the group *románticos progresistas* who preferred to leave behind Spanish colonial architecture, in favour of an updated version from the *quattrocento fiorentino.* As Brandariz (1998) stated, the Italian architecture from this historical period represented *'a symbol of intellectual freedom. Italian architecture, therefore, would be the symbol of the new civil liberty of Argentina'*.

The late-nineteenth century Italian *homo viator,* therefore, was called upon to bring his/her civilising order *to* the alien state, that of the post-colonial condition. In choosing a symbolic version of *quattrocento fiorentino,* Argentines were subsequently handing Italian governing and cultural elites a formidable platform for the dissemination of their global and cosmopolitan culture, *civiltá italiana*.

Emilio Pettoruti and Lina Bo Bardi as Homo Viator

> *'Travel concentrates as well as broadens the mind as a result of these experiences of unfamiliarity … Travellers are often cast in the role of structuralists, necessarily binarized, engaged in an outsiderly process of judgement and comparison.'*[1] (Curtis, 1994)

During Mediaeval times, the *homo viator* did not exercise critical judgement, as seeking divine order transcended any need for rational thought. Yet in the twentieth century, Emilio Pettoruti and Lina Bo Bardi both capitalised on their *otherness*, as outsiders cast in the role of a modern *homo viator*, a *structuralist.*

Emilio Pettoruti, born in Plata, Argentina in 1892 to Italian parents, travelled to Italy for the first time in 1913 after winning a scholarship. Lina Bo, born in Rome, Italy a year after the arrival of Pettoruti in the country, initially journeyed to Brazil in 1946. The outsider's perspective initially afforded both Pettoruti in Italy and Bo Bardi in Brazil the openness to view their new, strange environments with a critical eye. As each began to inhabit an alien land, the '*outsiderly process of judgment and comparison'* developed into an acute understanding a place.

Pettoruti's close friend, fellow Argentine, and *homo viator* in Italy, Xul Solar (2004) illustrated this point in October of 1924: *'Pettoruti spent ten years in Europe, studying in Florence for a great deal of that time. He admired all of Rome; he worked for several years in Milan. He knows all of Italy as few Italians do, and he knows Italians as few foreigners do'.*

Upon arriving in Brazil, Lina was confronted with a strangeness of landscape, climate, and racial composition of its people. In leaving behind the devastation of post-WWII Italy, she saw the New World as overflowing with opportunities. As with Pettoruti, Bo Bardi's curiosity developed into a keen knowledge with her adopted land, as Lehmann (2016) summed up: *'During this time* [1958 - 1969]*, she arguably became "more Brazilian" than the Brazilian people themselves'.*

Emilio Pettoruti and Lina Bo Bardi as Homo Viator/Liminal Personae

Before travelling across the Atlantic, neither Pettoruti nor Bo Bardi had had any direct experiences with Italy or Brazil, respectively. Both, however, possessed indirect, *a priori* knowledge, as their lives had been informed by the Italian *homo viatores* who had come before them, their initial liminal status, *emigrant colonialism*,

and the dissemination of *civiltá italiana* in Argentina and Brazil. For these reasons, the typical *homo viator* binary opposition did not strictly define their voyages from the *stable orde*r of a familiar land to the *strangenes*s of an unknown one. Both were not complete aliens or outsiders, but in actuality *liminal personae*, threshold people.

Pettoruti, received an *a priori* knowledge of Italy from birth. The families of both his parents emigrated from the Italic peninsula, were metaphorically *homo viatores* who benefitted from their liminal condition, and were part of Italy's *emigrant colonialism*. Pettoruti's father, José, an owner of an import store of Italian oil and wines, was a living example of what Einaudi had predicted - that *'economic trade would follow from open emigration rather than political domination'*. A young Emilio participated directly in Italian government's promotion of *civiltá italiana* by attending elementary school at La Plata's *Escuela Italiana* (Kaplan, 2014).

Lina's exposure to Brazil undoubtedly came in part from the direct experiences of her husband, art collector, cultural promoter and critic, Pierto Maria Bardi. In 1933 he curated an exhibition of Italian *razionalismo* architecture and ventured to display it in Argentina. Sponsored by the fascist regime, the exhibition was a politically motivated dissemination of *civiltá italiana*.

PM Bardi, however, had an ulterior motive. As de Almeida Lima (2013) stated, Bardi was starting to look '*discreetly for new markets for the works in his private art gallery among the South American influx of wealthy Italian immigrants'*. São Paulo was one of these markets and on this trip PM Bardi made a stop there. Could a potential move to Brazil afford PM Bardi the opportunity to capitalise on the culmination of '*cultural and economic trade from open emigration'* about which Einaudi had spoken three decades previously? Would the exportation of PM Bardi's art collection of many Italian maestros, be a means of spreading *civiltá italiana*?

With the fall of fascism in Italy and the resulting uncertainty of the reconstruction era that followed, a transfer to Brazil for the Bardis became a welcomed reality. In 1946, the Bardis took the voyage from the Old to New World that many generations of the mobile Italian *homo viatores* had taken before them. With the exportation of his extensive art collection, PM Bardi was aspiring to benefit from *emigrant colonialism* in Brazil just as José Pettoruti had done, albeit more modestly, decades before in Argentina. The Bardis saw the opportunity to be part of this economically and culturally beneficial continuum, and in the process spread their own form of *civiltá italiana*, as part of another wave of Italian *liminal personae*.

Emilio Pettoruti and Lina Bo Bardi as Liminal Personae - personally

Defying Classification of National Identity

Yet, whilst both Pettoruti and Bo Bardi could identify somewhat with their new lands, they often remained in a liminal state of being in regards to their individual national identities. When a need arose, they both seemed to adopt a national identity of convenience that would serve them.

Pettoruti was either Argentine/criollo or Italian, depending on the situation. According to Solar (2012): '*He is proud of his pure Italian blood, nevertheless— due to racial flexibility— he also wants to be criollo, as criollo to us as a plumed Indian or the great distant pampas that are seldom seen: our heritage'*.

Sometimes, categories were placed upon Pettoruti, even to his dismay. Previously implemented Italian laws granted Emilio Italian citizenship. Although he never acknowledged this status, the Italian authorities almost did. On his first sojourn to Italy which lasted into WWI, he encountered a few precarious situations as he himself (2006) recounted in the following examples: the prospect of being drafted by the Italian military - *'for Italian law required sons of Italians to adopt their parents' nationality';* misunderstood by a local to be in Italy to fight for *la patria - 'he declared how happy he was, as an Italian, to see a young artist who had crossed the oceans in order to fight for the land of his forefathers';* detained by officers who suspected he was an Italian trying to avoid military service - *I heard someone talking on the phone, saying: "It's a foreigner, an Argentine." They finally let me go….'*

Yet when it suited him, Pettoruti was content with the ambiguity of his national identity. A Swedish painter came to Milan where Emilio was living at the time to choose some of his works to be amongst 'local' artists in an exhibition of 'Italian Art' in Stockholm (Pettoruti, 2006). He did point out that he was an Argentine who was working in Italy. Others in the European art world were also surprised at his national identity. As Pettoruti (2006) recalled '*the gallery owner Léonce Rosenburg in Paris, was "taken aback upon learning I was Argentine and not Italian ... '*

In case of Bo Bardi, she was known internationally as the Brazilian architect/designer/journalist/film-maker who had been born in Italy. In 1951, however, she stated: *'I became a Brazilian citizen. I was not born here. I chose this place. This is why Brazil is my very own country'.* Whilst this declaration could be interpreted as a rejection of her Italian identity, she never turned her back completely on her country of origin. She returned on many occasions which allowed her to maintain her cultural ties with the Italian design community.

Her writings whilst in Brazil were also a means of keeping connected Italy and the Old World in general, but not without capitalising on her liminal state of convenience in regards to her own national identity. As Silvana Rubino (2013) states of Bo Bardi in the Introduction to Stones Against Diamonds: '*Her position was often ambiguous, as she would speak to Brazilians as a foreigner but respond as a native to friends abroad, such as Bruno Zevi or Max Bill'.*

Emilio Pettoruti and Lina Bo Bardi as Liminal Personae - professionally

Questions of National Identity - Hybrid Works

Yet did this preferred liminal state of being with regards to national identity effect them professionally? Did the works of cultural production of Pettoruti or Bo Bardi favour one national identity over another? Did they express an *ambiguous* national identity in the form of hybridity? If so, did this hybridity extend to a coexistence of universal ideals of Modernism and local/regional/vernacular traditions?

As a painter interested in modern abstraction, it would be difficult for Pettoruti to incorporate into his works identifiable representations of Argentine national identity such as ponchos, gauchos, mate or tango dancers. Any obvious cultural signifiers associated with such an identity could fall prey to folklore and this would seem antithetical to intentions of an abstract painter.

In 1955, Argentine art critic Marta Traba (2012) pointed out how another Argentine critic, Julio Payró, defended the works of Pettoruti as containing national character without folkloric imagery*: '...his basically visual art becomes a limpid national*

pictorial poem, inspired by a deep understanding of our physical nature and invigorated by the complex emotions of the simple man … '

Traba (1994) herself has also stated how she believed Pettoruti had found an appropriate balance in a certain set of investigations: *'Pettoruti achieved the happiest fusion of modern avant-garde and nationalist tendencies to be found in the whole of modern Argentine art in a series of pictures in which sunlight entering a room falls upon a typical still-life grouping ... '*

As part of the power-couple bearing *civiltá italiana*, Italian cultural cosmopolitanism, Bo Bardi, would ironically find herself on the opposite side of a *cosmopolitan* debate. According to de Almeida Lima (2013): '*Bo Bardi's neorealist sensibility, with its roots in local, everyday life-ways, did not align with the leading Brazilian architects' interest in cosmopolitan nation-building…'* In this sense, Lina was against the importation of universal ideals of Modernism, a form of cosmopolitanism which was not taking into account the everyday lives of Brazilians.

In donning the role of an educator, Bo Bardi reinforced these points to the next generation of Brazilian architects: '*..students (should) be introduced to a "vast horizon instead of partially looking into a single direction" and that they create works instilled with the sense of an authentic national character instead of a "vague and abstract cosmopolitan"'* (de Almeida Lima, 2013).

The should-be-*cosmopolitan* Italian was in fact encouraging Brazilians to find their own national character by arguing against the importation of cosmopolitan ideals that internationally renowned Brazilian born architects had been doing at the time. Bo Bardi was able to argue her position because as an outsider, her critical eye gave her an insight that is often overlooked by natives. The blind importation of the universal qualities of Modernism had its limitations for Lina. Lehmann. (2016) states that Bo Bardi *'... became increasingly concerned about the erosion of Brazilian culture and identity through the process of modernisation in her adopted homeland'.*

Emilio Pettoruti and Lina Bo Bardi as Liminal Personae - professionally

Hybrid Works - Universal Modernism v Traditional/Vernacular/Regional

> *'The impact of immigration is important in understanding the Brazilian condition: the importation of architectural ideas inevitably creates contextualised hybrid forms, products of foreign importation melting with local forms and traditions. Alongside the "foreign" and the "own" there is a third category, the "adapted foreign", leading to new constructed identities'.*
> (Lehmann, 2016)

The creative works of both Pettoruti and Bo Bardi may be viewed as in-between *'the foreign'* and *'the local'* in this '*third category, the adapted foreign*. This third category, I would argue, is a new constructed identity, one of liminality.

Upon arriving in Italy, Pettoruti was eager to study the *quattrocento* painters. In the spirit of the *homo viator*, Pettoruti was learning, intentionally or not, the sense of celestial order in the works of these maestros. During his studies he was exposed to the magnitude of *civiltá italiana* in situ as part of his education would stem from encounters with many avant-garde intellectuals and artists such as Margherita Sarfatti, promoter of the *novecento* movement and Filippo Marinetti, creator of *futurismo*. Each of these influential figures was keen to have the Argentine follow

his/her contemporary version of *civiltá italiana.* Pettoruti resisted their cajoling and began a life long ambition to not join any one particular movement. As Solar (2004) pointed out: *'Pettoruti has no intention of pressing this or that given style…..'*

Whilst Pettoruti refused to conform to one movement, Solar (2012) also understood the importance of retaining an openness in viewing the works as a whole: '*We do not wish to pigeonhole what is genuine and diverse: Pettoruti's paintings … Even varied as they are, they are a school in and of themselves, a school of criollo roots'.*

The labelling of an artist's works by style often reduces them to a few shared, identifiable traits set in a particular time frame. Pettoruti (2006) explained the dilemma he faced regarding labelling in relation to time: '*These paintings … were considered Futurist at the time, … then, people branded them as Cubist; today they are called abstract and tomorrow they will probably belong to a new category. Only valid works survive labels'.* Validity and survival imply transcendental qualities, I would argue, where creative works outlive the artist's terrestrial existence.

Bo Bardi, in the true spirit of *liminal personae*, also spent a lifetime evading being pigeonholed and, as a result, her creative endeavours represented various types of hybridity, coexistence, and/or dialogue. Her built works expressed different forms of coexistence, overlapping between: 1) the universal qualities of European Modernism and local, vernacular traditions; 2) ideas being explored by her contemporaries in Brazil such as Artigas and/or back in Italy such as Scarpa, Albini, Nervi, Zevi, etc; and/or 3) advanced technology and the prosaic qualities of everyday life.

The influence of Zevi can be found in various projects which incorporated organic geometries – not in a dogmatic way, but in a blending. As de Almeida Lima (2013) points out: *'In 1962 and 1963, she also developed a few unrealized architectural studies in Brazil and even in Italy …. they are examples of her hybrid vocabulary of naturalistic and rationalistic references and orthogonal and organic geometries'.*

Italian colleague Nervi aided Lina on the technological innovations found in her impactful project, MASP, which resulted in suspending technology and the quotidian in a liminal state. Again de Almeida Lima (2013) described this in-between-ness: '*The architecture for the museum emerged* somewhere between *Artigas's position and that of European designers, from her growing belief in the coexistence of advanced technology and the poetry and improvisation of everyday life'.*

Emilio Pettoruti and Lina Bo Bardi as Liminal Personae - professionally

Alienation by Contemporaries

> *'The being who is ready for anything … reaches out … beyond his narrow self, prepared to consecrate his being to a cause which is greater than he is, but which at the same time he makes his own'.* (Marcel, 1951)
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> *'"What is a rebel?" asks Camus. "A man who says 'no.' .. the 'no' affirms the existence of a border or a boundary….*' (Marcel, 1951)

Both Pettoruti and Bo Bardi purposely '*eluded … the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space'.* The breaking out of perceived cultural boundaries often led to various forms of *alienation* and harsh criticisms by their peers.

In the case of Pettoruti, his abstract works were accepted in the Old World, but they were criticised in the New World. Medina (2004) recounted how Fernando de Szyszlo of Peru delivered an oblique compliment that doubled as a disparaging criticism: *'Pettoruti is a painter whose work is admirable, but his defect is that he has no roots'*. For some, particularly the North American art-establishment, having *'no roots'* typically meant that the content of Pettoruti's works did not demonstrate folkloric depictions of rural life involving indigenous peoples. As a result Pettoruti was denied placement into many major exhibition spaces such as MoMA.

The cultural establishments in the New World did not consider Pettoruti as '*authentic*', as his works did not indicate a regional '*provenance*' (Serviddio, 2010). Pejorative expressions such as having '*no roots*' - a contradiction to Solar's claim that Pettoruti's oeuvre belonged to '*a school of criollo roots'* - and not indicating a regional *'provenance*' were clear rejections of Pettoruti's works as '*adapted foreign*'.

His works were in fact too foreign, too rebellious for locals. The general public did not necessarily accept Pettoruti's initial works as was evident in the fistfights that broke out in the galleries at his first opening nights back in Argentina. The art establishment did not help. Argentine journalists and art critics who categorised Pettoruti as part of the Italian *futurismo* movement abetted perceptions of his works as foreign. As Pettoruti (2006) explained: *'... they presented me as a Futurist painter; the comment wasn't flattering in the least, for to be called a "Futurist" in Argentina in 1924 ... meant one was mad, deceitful, extravagant, a fake or a liar'*.

Emilio's initial encounters with the charismatic founder of Italian *futurismo* back in Italy were now beginning to haunt him in Argentina. Although Pettoruti would remain in Argentina for 28 years (before returning to the Old World), he would not be free from Marinetti's repeated attempts to have the Argentine join *futurismo*.

Emilio tried to retain his liminality by avoiding to be categorised, but being labelled a Futurist was only part of his struggle whilst in Argentina. In 1932 Pettoruti (2006) lamented his situation: *'My paintings were not selling…. After having declared I was a "Futurist", it turned out I was not, that I was a Cubist, and a follower of Picasso on top of that, or that I copied Juan Gris; others went as far as saying I followed "Severini's luminous trail".'*

The constant re-categorising of Pettoruti's paintings must have led to public confusion over the intentions in the works. Solar (2004) illustrated the public's continuous struggles to accept Pettoruti's paintings: *'His works are already numerous, but they may be condemned by the public as "incomprehensible" or "off-kilter" when they are shown'*.

Bo Bardi was equally rebellious to various sorts of categorisation, as de Oliveira (2006) states: '*Many times, Lina herself rejected the labels 'idealist', 'romantic' and 'utopian' that were often bestowed on her'*. De Almeida Lima (2013) reiterates this rebellious stance: '*Lina Bo Bardi was an outsider, interested in doing "her own thing", and often described as prolific and non-conformist'*.

As a result of not conforming to any '*single direction*', Lina became vulnerable to professional criticisms. De Almeida Lima (2013) illustrates how leading native Brazilians chastised her efforts: first from two members of the cosmopolitan, nation building, Carioca school - *'.... Costa remarked of Bo Bardi dismissively - "You're so dull, so many drawings." Niemeyer was no kinder – "Europeans make things seem*

too complicated"; and second from one of the academic architects at the University of São Paulo - *'Vilanova Artigas … saw Bo Bardi's ideas about simple objects and popular culture as folkloristic and nationalistic'*. Perhaps this last criticism stems from Lina's incorporation into her works of aspects of African Brazilian culture, considered '*folkloristic'*. In so doing, she was one of the few, if not the only, architects/designers to include this group in the national discourse.

Conclusion

> *'…[T]here is only room for hope when the soul manages to get free from the categories in which consciousness confines itself as soon as it makes a clear line of demarcation between what it knows for a fact on the one hand and what it wishes or desires on the other. Perhaps hope means first of all the act by which this line of demarcation is obliterated or denied. … hope is a knowing which outstrips the unknown – but it is a knowing which excludes all presumption ….'* (Marcel, 1951)

Before Emilo Pettoruti or Lina Bo Bardi ventured across the Atlantic Ocean as a metaphorical *homo viator*, each had benefitted indirectly from those Italian émigrés who had previously gambled their fates in hope of a better life in the New World. Many of these émigrés, unbeknownst to them, were part of government strategies which inadvertently placed them in a liminal state of national, cultural, and socio-political identities. The successes experienced by both Pettoruti and Bo Bardi can be understood as part of a greater continuum that preceded them, that of Italian *emigrant capitalism* and the promotion of the cosmopolitan Italian culture on a global scale, *civilità italiana*.

The ambiguous state of their national identities affected how they operated personally and were treated professionally. The creative works of Pettoruti or Bo Bardi, may be viewed as examples of cultural production that did not necessarily favour one (national) identity over another, but instead expressed liminality, that of the adapted foreign in the form of hybridity. Each was able to express said hybridity in different ways, but undoubtedly there was a coexistence between universal ideals of Modernism and local, regional, or vernacular traditions present. In so doing, they effectively managed, I would argue, to '*slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space'*.

Although their contemporaries often alienated them, both Pettoruti and Bo Bardi had a wide array of friends and colleagues who were outside boundaries of their own professional training. In addition to the poet Filippo Marinetti, Pettoruti associated with Italian modern architect Alberto Satoris, Argentine author Jorge Borges, and Italian art critic Margherita Sarfatti, to name a few. Bo Bardi also associated freely with non-architects such as cultural critics, filmmakers, furniture makers, etc. She occupied the liminal space between being an architect and being a critic, educator, journalist, filmmaker and/or designer. In so doing, she was not just a maker, but a facilitator. As de Almeida Lima (2013) pointed out: '*she eventually played a role of keen messenger among different worlds, discourses, and scales: south and north, popular and cosmopolitan, modern and traditional, industrial and preindustrial, national and international'*. The same could easily be said of Pettoruti.

The *role of keen messenger*, I would argue, was a result of each benefiting from a lifetime of wayfaring, albeit intelligently, between New and Old Worlds. As a

modern version of a *homo viator*, or more precisely as a *artifex viator,* Pettoruti and Bo Bardi each employed mobility as a means of broadening the mind whilst hoping to transcend the confines of categorisations.

We find today that their shared sense of openness to the unknown is capitulating to close-mindedness. Lines of demarcation are *not* being obliterated, but instead are being constructed. Unfortunately, those who promote fear by contamination of *the other* are championing isolationism through identity politics and/or neo-nationalism.

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